

## The Real and the Unreal

Discussing the question of earnestness as one of the important elements of a successful preacher, an exchange tells of an instance where the pulpit was filled by a man of great abilities, who with great eloquence and power proclaimed week by week the vital truths and solemn warnings of the gospel. But to all appearances his earnestness was reserved for the pulpit alone, for when the service was over, and in all his daily intercourse with his people, he was given to jesting and triviality, to leisure and ease, and indicated by not a single sign that the weighty truths he had preached with such force on the Sabbath held the slightest influence in his heart, or even occupied his thoughts. No effort was made in private to enforce the claims of the gospel, no parishioner was spoken to on the subject of personal religion, no sinner was warned, no house to house visitation carried the divine message to the families of his flock. In other words all evidence was lacking that the preacher either felt or believed what he preached, and this proof of unreality on the part of the preacher nullified his Sunday orations, and left his pastorate like the barren fig tree.

Now what a wide contrast there is between this preacher, who we may justly regard as a type, and that pattern for all preachers and pastors, St. Paul, of whose methods we catch a glimpse in the twentieth chapter of Acts. Listen to this: "Therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." . . . "And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house." Can we imagine Paul in the role of some modern pastors with their voluminous chatter about everything and nothing, their apparent indifference, their studious reticence upon all subjects relative to personal religion as they go their occasional rounds among the members of the congregation? But you may say that a pastor may easily bore his people by always running after them, however laudable his mission. To this we reply that given an ordinary measure of tact and judgment, the pastor will not so easily bore his people if they know that his loving and earnest message comes right out of his heart and life. On the other hand the element of *reality* which they will recognize in him will prove a source of such power, will bring forth such a glorious fruitage, that religious lukewarmness, that state of mind and heart which is the most easily bored by the theme of personal religion, will disappear.

What the present day pulpit needs, and the present day pastorate also, is that measure and that kind of earnestness which is born of *reality*—*real* religion, *real* consecration. Sometime since two young preachers were holding a series of meetings in a large city church where religion had got to be so dead that there were not enough saints to fill the amen corner, and what were there didn't have enough spiritual life to sing Old Hundred thru without dragging it to the ground. But the young preachers had some life in them, and they made such a rattling among those dry bones that in a week's time the immense church was crammed and jammed with people, and both sinners and saints were being converted. The pastors of the other churches, scholarly fellows who delivered polished essays to their easy going congregations, came to this meeting and sat among the con-

gregation. The explanation of this phenomenon was found in the comment current in the town, that "Those young preachers were in such real earnest." For the first week or ten days they went from house to house, praying and talking with the people, and while that lasted the Spirit worked mightily. But by and by the big public meetings absorbed all their time and energy, the house to house work stopped, and the "power" disappeared. Real earnestness is born only of real religion, and whenever you are able to comprehend the difference between these two terms, real, and unreal, particularly when linked to personal religion, you do not need that either we or anyone else should instruct you on a subject of very vital importance.

## Zealous Governors

The governors of Virginia and Ohio have recently taken strong ground against a proposed prize fight between two notorious bruizers, both of them promising to exert all their power to prevent it within the bounds of their respective states. This is good. It goes to show that the moral sentiment in the country against prize fighting has become so strong that it is perfectly safe for politicians to respect it. Prize fighting is coarse, brutal and demoralizing. Moreover it has no votes, no political influence, no immense corruption fund, produces no revenue to the State. The saloon is also coarse, brutal and demoralizing, much more so in the aggregate, a thousand times more, than the prize ring. But the saloon has votes, it has political influence, it has a vast corruption fund, it produces an enormous revenue to the State. Therein, hark you, lies a weighty difference. Politicians, governors, political parties must think twice before they cry down the saloon. It has so many friends. A majority zeal is a mighty safe thing, but a minority zeal is different. Good people who are the friends of reform, without regard to what it will cost, must persevere in the campaign of education, so as to bring public sentiment over to the side of righteousness as against expediency in the solution of this saloon question. No path of Christian duty can by any possibility be any plainer than that. All honor to the governors of Virginia and Ohio for the stand they have taken against the prize fight; now let them take a similar stand against that other iniquity, worse only because of its magnitude, the saloon.

## A Queen's Wedding

The busy old world paused for awhile to smile upon the beautiful young Holland queen on her wedding day. Wilhelmina marries the man of her choice, and the exuberant happiness of her people on the auspicious occasion seems to be reflected by the whole civilized world. Perhaps that marriage means no more to the world than the wedding of some obscure couple of whom the world has never heard. Doubtless more of blessing will come from many a country home unknown to fame,—of dauntless heart, and a strong arm, and sublime consecration for the world's real work,—than will arise from the palace of the Holland Queen. For God has his own kings and queens whom he crowns with the more than royal distinction of brilliant talents, of kindly hearts, and beautiful service.